

CDC's SODIUM REDUCTION INITIATIVE

Saving Lives and Money



Why Is Eating Too Much Sodium Harmful?

Eating too much sodium can lead to increased blood pressure, which can raise the risk of heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular conditions.

On average, most Americans exceed their recommended daily limit of sodium.

Reducing sodium intake can help lower blood pressure and improve heart health.

CDC is working at the national, state, and local levels to help reduce sodium in the food supply in the United States. CDC's approach to sodium reduction includes supporting and evaluating ongoing initiatives to reduce sodium, providing technical assistance to the public health community, expanding the scientific literature related to sodium reduction, collaborating with stakeholders, and educating the public. CDC is also working with and garnering feedback from the food industry to enhance and facilitate collaboration on sodium reduction.

Sodium reduction is a priority for CDC, and a concerted effort is made toward gradual population sodium reduction, blood pressure control, and improved nutrition. CDC's Sodium Reduction Initiative is led by the agency's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and supports the Million Hearts®

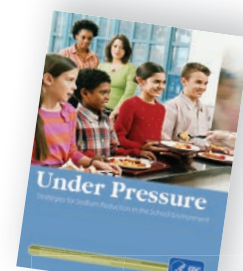
goal of reducing 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017. This document presents a summary of select activities that support this work.

Supporting and Evaluating Ongoing Initiatives to Reduce Sodium

- Providing annual national- and state-level data on cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors
- Working with government partners to [track the most common foods](#) contributing to [sodium intake](#)
- Determining the most cost-effective and feasible [biomarker](#) methods to measure population sodium intake
- Assessing [consumer readiness](#) to reduce sodium intake
- Conducting [evaluations](#) of [community-level](#) sodium reduction efforts to build the [evidence](#) around effective strategies

Providing Technical Assistance to the Public Health Community

- Publishing [guides and resource documents](#) to reduce sodium in settings such as schools, hospitals, worksites, and institutionalized environments and in meals served to older adults
- Developing [information for patients](#) related to sodium and high blood pressure for healthcare providers to use in the [primary care setting](#)
- Developing and hosting webinars on topics such as [return on investment from sodium reduction](#), [group purchasing to reduce food costs](#), and [connecting public health and foodservice operators](#)



- Communicating globally through the [Sodium Reduction Toolkit: A Global Opportunity to Reduce Population-Level Sodium Intake](#) in English and Spanish
- Supporting the [Sodium Reduction in Communities Program](#) and [state programs](#) working on sodium reduction nationwide
- Identifying strategies for working with [restaurants](#) on sodium reduction, such as adopting a certification program for restaurants offering more healthful items, developing trainings, and offering assistance from a registered dietitian
- Providing targeted technical assistance to select states, aimed at building capacity for sodium reduction efforts at the state level

Expanding the Scientific Literature

- Evaluating the [cost-effectiveness](#) of interventions designed to reduce sodium intake and to model the impact of sodium reduction on mortality
- Categorizing [top sources](#) of [sodium](#) consumed in the U.S. population and among different age groups, including [infants](#) and [children](#)
- Identifying the prevalence of [excess sodium intake](#) among the U.S. population
- Examining [sodium and potassium intake in children](#) and the association between [sodium and potassium intake on blood pressure](#)

Collaborating with Stakeholders

- Facilitating discussions among grantees, partners, and industry groups to better understand what can and is being done to [reduce and reformulate sodium](#) in the food supply and at the community level
- Developing [success stories](#) related to sodium reduction
- Meeting with industry trade associations and manufacturers, most often in collaboration with government partners
- Developing business case success stories related to [return on investment](#) from sodium reduction activities

Educating the Public

- Providing a [Healthy Eating & Lifestyle Resource Center](#), an interactive website featuring recipes, meal plans, and articles related to heart healthy living
- Publishing consumer-focused [fact sheets](#) on sodium and dietary guidelines, sources of sodium in the diet, sodium and processed food, and tips to reduce sodium intake, among others
- Developing [infographics](#) related to sources of sodium and sodium reduction
- Hosting a [CDC website](#) dedicated solely to sodium reduction
- Communicating via social media on sodium-related topics

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/salt.



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